Arms Transfers

The world arms trade rose to \$51.6 billion in 1999, an 8.5% rise after a surge in 1997 and a nearly matching 1998 decline during the Asian financial crisis. The trade's erratic path since the post-cold-war low in 1994 averaged a moderate 3% annual real growth. In 1999, arms imports and exports (equal at the world level) were 19% above the 1994 low, but 12% below the recent 1997 peak, and 40% below the all-time 1987 high.

	Billion	
Year	1999 \$	Index
1999	51.6	59.5
1997	58.4	67.4
1994	43.5	50.2
1987	86.7	100.0
	1999 1997 1994	1999 51.6 1997 58.4 1994 43.5

Arms Import Trends

The developed countries have been the main recipients of the recent increase in global arms transfers, with their imports rising an average annual 13% since the 1995 low. Over the entire post-cold-war period since 1991, both the developed and developing groups have imported roughly the same cumulative volume of arms and experienced similar declining annual rates of -1 to -2%. However, in the last two years the developed group has taken the lead in imports.

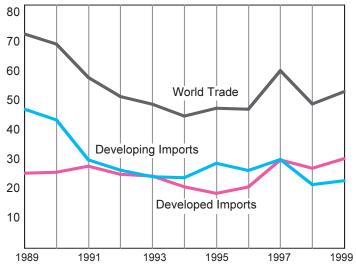
Developing country imports, in contrast, dropped an average annual 13% since 1997, 6% since 1995, and 2% since 1991. The traditional predominance of developing countries' arms imports ended with their precipitous drop after the cold war.

The two groups' relative shares of total world arms imports have nearly been reversed over the decade. Developed countries, which imported about one third of all arms in 1989, imported well over half in 1999, while the developing share went from two-thirds to under a half. The shares were (in percent):

	1989	1994	1999
Developed	35	47	57
Developing	65	53	43

Figure 3. World Arms Imports: 1989-1999

billions of constant 1999 dollars



Arms Imports: Shares and Growth (in provided Share with the provided Share and Growth (in provided Share decorated Share) World Share decorated Share decorated Share and Share decorated Share and Share an							
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	1 -12.8						
Southern Africa 2.8 1.1 -12	5 14.3						
50uniciii / 1111ca 2.0 1.1 -12	3 7.2						
Central Africa 2.7 1.1 -9.5	9 28.4						
Central Asia & Cauc. — .4 —	-31.2						
Central Amer. & Car. 3.1 .1 -31.	2 -26.7						
Europe, all 22.7 31.5 -2.	8 11.6						
Africa, all 8.8 3.6 -9.5	8 15.4						
Organization / Reference Group							
OECD 25.0 48.6 0.6	6 15.2						
NATO, all 18.9 31.4 -2.4	4 14.7						
NATO Europe 15.2 26.4 -2.4	4 14.0						
OPEC 25.7 21.3 -3.0	0 -7.5						
Latin America 5.4 2.0 -9.:	2 -12.1						
	-7.5						

Arms imports of the top 5 regions over the decade were as follows (in billions of 1999 dollars):

	Middle East	East Asia	West Europe	North Amer.	South Asia
1989	22.0	8.6	11.9	2.8	9.4
1990	22.3	8.4	12.6	2.7	7.9
1991	18.1	8.5	14.8	2.8	4.2
1992	18.8	8.3	13.4	3.2	1.5
1993	17.5	7.5	10.7	2.2	1.2
1994	15.5	9.1	9.4	2.0	0.8
1995	18.2	9.8	8.2	1.4	1.4
1996	17.1	10.3	10.2	1.7	0.8
1997	20.3	17.2	10.3	2.1	1.4
1998	15.4	12.3	9.5	2.2	1.2
1999	13.5	11.4	15.1	2.8	1.8

In the 1997-1999 period, the top regions' cumulative arms imports were (in billions of current dollars):

Middle East	48.5
East Asia	40.4
West Europe	34.1
North America	7.1
South Asia	4.4

In 1999, the top three regions—Western Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia—imported 78% of the world total. The addition of North America as the fourth raised the share to 83%. In 1989, the same top three made up 60%, and the top four (with South Asia), 74%, indicating that the concentration of imports in the top regions has increased.

Note:

- Total arms imports are equal to total arms exports at the world level (only).
- U.S. arms exports are estimated by use of a new interim method, beginning with WMEAT 1997, and are substantially higher than previously reported (see Statistical Notes).
- Initial estimates of non-U.S. totals for the latest year are based on incomplete data and tend to rise when reestimated in subsequent editions.

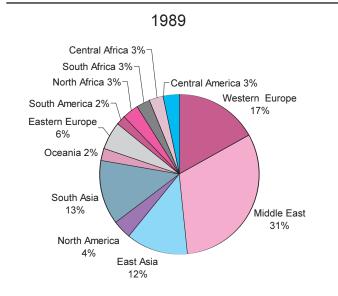
Western Europe became the principal arms importing region in 1999, overtaking the Middle East, the traditional leader. The region's growth since the post-cold-war low in 1995 has averaged 12% per year, with a 59% jump in 1999 alone.

The main Western European importers in 1997-1999 were (in billions of current dollars):

Turkey	6.2	T4 1	
	0.2	Italy	1.7
Greece	3.7	France	1.3
Germany	2.7	Finland	1.2
Netherlands	2.3	Norway	1.2
Switzerland	1.9	Sweden	1.0
Greece Germany Netherlands	3.7 2.7 2.3	France Finland Norway	1. 1. 1.

Middle East arms imports, after peaking in 1990 and again in 1997, fell to a decade low in 1999, declining at average rates of 3% over the entire decade and 6.7% in the latter half.

Figure 4. Regional Shares of the World Arms Import Market: 1989 and 1999



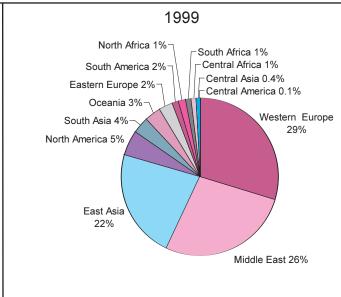
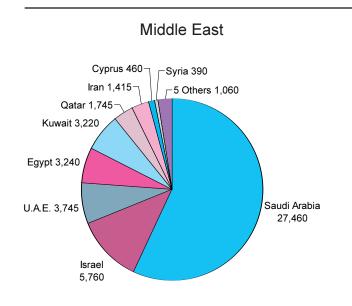
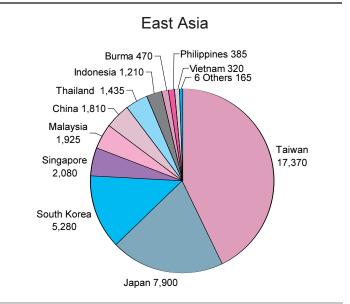
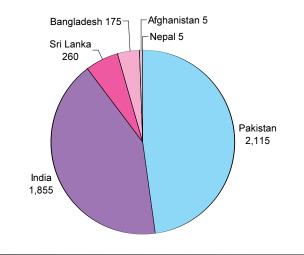


Figure 5. Regional Arms Imports, 1997-1999 (Millions of current dollars)

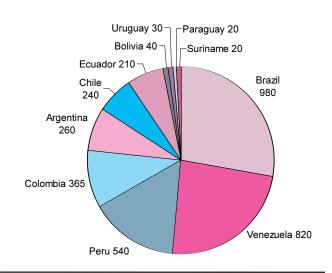




South Asia



South America



Saudi Arabia, with 57% of the region's imports in 1997-1999, accounted for most of the decline in the recent period, together with **Kuwait. Israel**, with 12% of regional imports in 1997-1999, reached a new decade high in 1999, after a steep drop in 1995 and a rapid 30% annual growth since. Over the entire decade, Israel's imports fell at a 1% average rate.

The main Middle Eastern arms importers in 1997-1999 were (in billions of current dollars):

Saudi Arabia	27.5	Kuwait	3.2
Israel	5.8	Qatar	1.7
Un. Arab Emir.	3.7	Iran	1.4
Egypt	3.2		

East Asia, the third largest arms importing region, grew at an average annual rate of 6% from 1989 to a sharp peak in 1997, then fell at a 20% rate through 1999.

The main East Asian arms importers in 1997-1999 were (in billions of current dollars):

China -Taiwan	17.4	Malaysia	1.9
Japan	7.9	China -Mnlnd	1.8
South Korea	5.3	Thailand	1.4
Singapore	2.1	Indonesia	1.2

China-Taiwan ranked second and Japan third among world importers in that period.

South Asia, the third largest importing region in 1989, lowered imports at a very rapid 55% average annual rate to a 1994 low, and at a 17% rate to 1999, when it had fallen to fifth among regions.

South Asia's main importers in 1997-1999 were Pakistan (\$2.1 billion) **and India** (\$1.9 billion). Sri Lanka and Bangladesh acquired arms in the \$100-300 million range.

North America, which became the fourth largest importing region in 1992, had arms imports growing at a 17% annual rate from a 1995 low to a 1999 level matching that of 1989, with an overall declining average rate of 3%.

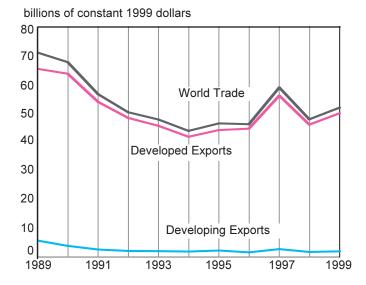
The United States ranked a surprisingly high eighth in 1997-1999 arms imports with \$5.1 billion. Canada had \$1.7 billion in that period.

The world's top 15 arms importers ranked for 1999 alone and for the cumulative 1997-1999 period are shown below (in billions of current dollars).

	Top Arms In	nporters	(billion dollars)	
	1999		1997-1999	
1	Saudi Arabia	7.7	Saudi Arabia	27.5
2	Turkey	3.2	China -Taiwan	17.4
3	Japan	3.0	Japan	7.9
4	China -Taiwan	2.6	United Kingdom	6.6
5	United Kingdom	2.6	Turkey	6.2
6	Israel	2.4	Israel	5.8
7	South Korea	2.2	South Korea	5.3
8	Greece	1.9	United States	5.1
9	United States	1.6	Australia	4.0
10	Germany	1.3	United Arab Emir.	3.7
11	Australia	1.1	Greece	3.7
12	Switzerland	1.1	Egypt	3.2
13	Canada	1.0	Kuwait	3.2
14	Pakistan	1.0	Germany	2.7
15	Singapore	0.9	Netherlands	2.3

Arms Export Trends

Figure 6. World Arms Exports: 1989-1999



World arms exports (which equal world arms imports) turned back up in 1999 to \$51.6 billion, after a spike in 1997 and a downturn in 1998 infuenced by the Asian financial crisis. Since the post-cold-war low in 1994, the rising trend averaged 2.6% a year.

The 1999 level of world exports was 8.5% (\$8.1 billion) higher than the post cold-war low in 1994, but 27% (\$18.9 billion) below the decade high in 1989 and 40% (\$35.1 billion) below the all-time peak in 1987.

Developed nations overwhelmingly dominate the world arms market, accounting for 96% of total exports in 1999, compared to 92% a decade earlier. Because of their hold on the market, their arms export trends nearly mirror world trends.

Developed nations' arms exports in 1999 declined 11% (\$6.1 billion) since 1997, were 24% (\$15.3 billion) lower than a decade earlier, and were 36% (\$27.9 billion) below the all-time peak in 1987. They were 20% (\$8.1 billion) higher than the ten-year low set in 1994.

The developing world had a more pronounced relative decline in arms exports, which fell 29% from 1997 to 1999 and 65% from 1989. In 1989,

Table 5				
Arms Exports: Shar	es and	Growt	h (in pe	ercent)
	World	d Share	Real Gro	wth Rate*
	1989	1999	Decade 89-99	2nd Half 95-99
World	100.0	100.0	-2.7	2.6
Developed	92.0	96.2	-2.4	2.9
Developing	8.0	3.8	-7.6	-2.3
Region				
North America	31.8	65.1	1.6	7.3
Western Europe	19.1	22.5	.X	-3.1
Eastern Europe	39.0	8.5	-15.0	-3.3
East Asia	6.4	1.3	-14.8	-7.8
Middle East	2.6	1.2	-6.8	-16.1
Oceania	.1	1.1	16.8	42.3
Central Asia & Cauc.	_	.1	(11.3)	-25.2
South America	.6	.1	-25.7	-9.0
Southern Africa	.4	.1	3.6	-33.9
North Africa	.1	.1	-8.9	200.0
South Asia	.1	.X	-14.3	-5.8
Central Africa	.1	.X	-1.6	
Central Amer. & Car.	.0	.0	29.9	
Europe, all	58.0	31.0	-6.2	-3.1
Africa, all	.5	.2	1.8	-19.2
Organization / Referer	ice Gro	up		
OECD	51.3	89.0	1.2	4.3
NATO, all	48.9	86.3	1.2	4.4
NATO Europe	17.1	21.2	0.3	-2.3
CIS		7.8	(2.8)	-4.0
OPEC	.3	.3	3.0	-20.4
Latin America	.6	.1	-19.7	-9.7
* Average annual; a comport X Less than 0.05%.	ound rate	curve fit	ted to all p	oints.

x Less than 0.05%.

developing countries accounted for 8% of world arms exports, but by 1999, only 4%.

The U.S. accounted for 64% (\$33 billion) of total world arms exports in 1999. This was a record level, not only for the past decade but for all time, and amounted to a 52% increase over the 1989 level. In the 1997-1999 period, the U.S. share of the world market was 59%.

Over 70% of U.S. deliveries were made to developed nations in 1999. Western Europe was the largest importing region for U.S. arms, receiving 38%, East Asia was the second largest, with 27%, and the Middle East, third, with 21%.

^{()1992-1999.}

In 1997-1999, the main recipients of U.S. arms exports were (in billions of current dollars):

Saudi Arabia	14.1	Germany	2.3
China - Taiwan	10.0	Australia	2.3
Japan	7.9	Singapore	1.9
United Kingdom	6.6	Netherlands	1.7
Turkey	4.9	Canada	1.6
Israel	4.9	Switzerland	1.5
South Korea	4.2	Spain	1.4
Egypt	2.8	Italy	1.4
Greece	2.4	France	1.2
Kuwait	2.3	Finland	1.1

North America accounted for 65% of world arms exports in 1999, and 60% in 1997-1999.

Western Europe was the second largest arms exporting region in 1999, accounting for 23% of the world total. The United Kingdom, France, and Germany accounted for 10%, 6%, and 4% of total world arms exports respectively.

Over 80% of U.K. and French arms exports went to developing countries, with the Middle East being the largest recipient. In contrast, almost 80% of German deliveries went to developed nations, mainly in Western Europe.

Eastern Europe came in a distant third region, with 8.5% of the world's arms exports in 1999, edging up from its all time low of 6% in 1994. This was a dramatic decline from a decade earlier, when the region accounted for 39%, and the Soviet Union alone had 35%.

Russia, the region's primary arms exporter and trend-setter, has attempted to recoup some of the market. In 1999, Russian exports accounted for 6% of total world (compared to the 4% low in 1994) and 71% of total East European arms exports. East and South Asia received almost half of Russian arms exports, followed by Africa, the Middle East, and Western Europe. Ukraine accounted for 1% of total world arms exports.

East Asia, the Middle East, and Oceania each served only about 1% of the world arms export market. All other regions had insignificant shares, amounting to a tenth of a percent or less of total arms exports.

The world's top 15 individual arms exporters are shown below ranked for 1999 alone and for the 1997-1999 period (in billions of current dollars).

	Top Arms	Export	ers (billion dollars)	
	1999		1997-1999	
1	United States	33.0	United States	91.5
2	Untd Kngdm	5.2	Untd Kngdm	15.7
3	Russia	3.1	France	15.7
4	France	2.9	Russia	7.9
5	Germany	1.9	Germany	4.5
6	Sweden	0.7	Sweden	2.9
7	Israel	0.6	China - Mnlnd	2.0
8	Australia	0.6	Canada	1.6
9	Canada	0.6	Israel	1.6
10	Ukraine	0.6	Ukraine	1.5
11	Italy	0.4	Italy	1.3
12	China - MnInd	0.3	Australia	1.1
13	Belarus	0.3	Netherlands	1.1
14	Bulgaria	0.2	Belarus	0.9
15	North Korea	0.1	Spain	0.8

The U.S. and several allied countries are no longer mainly either arms exporters or importers; they ranked high in both categories recently. These countries and their ranks as arms exporters and arms importers in the cumulative 1997-1999 period are:

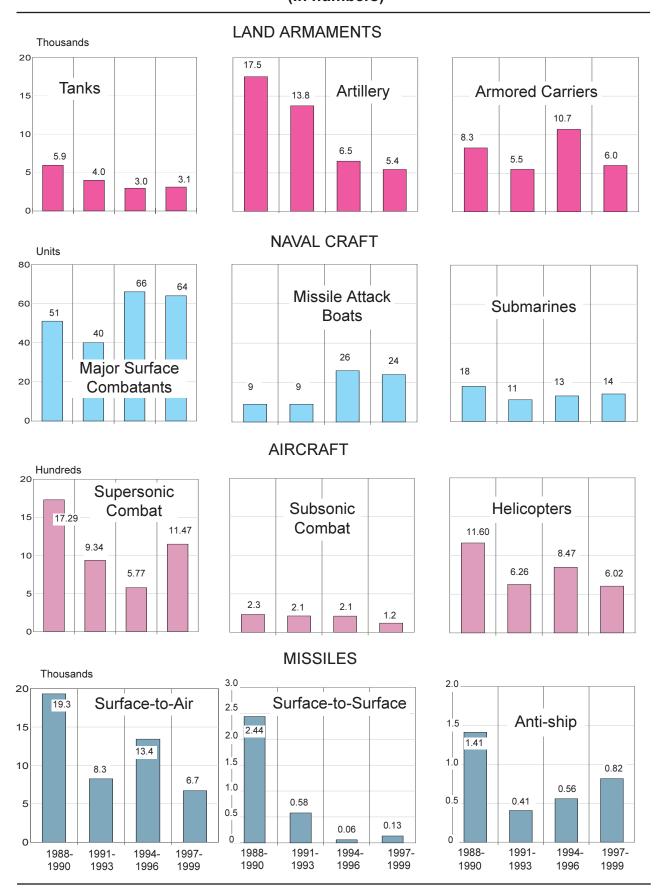
	_1997-1999 Rank As						
	Exporter	Importe					
United States	1	8					
United Kingdom	2	4					
Germany	5	14					
Israel	9	6					
Australia	12	9					
Netherlands	13	15					
1 to the familian	1.0	1.5					

A tendency toward greater collaboration and interdependence in arms production is apparent. Over half of U.S. arms imports in the period came from the other five listed countries, while theirs in turn came mainly from the U.S.—over 75% in the case of the U.K., Israel, Germany, and the Netherlands.

U.S. dominance of the arms market is likely in the near future; its share of export agreements signed in 1997-1999 was 69%. Russia, Germany, France, U.K., China, and Sweden had shares of 5.4, 5.3, 4.9, 2.9, 2.5, and 1.7%, respectively.

Many large importers rely heavily on the U.S.. Of the 43 countries with over \$500 million in arms imports in 1997-1999, 23 obtained two-thirds or more of their imports from the U.S..

Figure 7. WORLD DELIVERIES OF MAJOR WEAPONS, 1988 - 1999 (In numbers)



Number of Weapons Delivered

Besides dollar value measures of the broadly-defined arms trade discussed above, WMEAT reports on the actual deliveries in units of major weapons, by category and type, supplier countries or regions, recipient regions, and three-year period from 1988 to 1999 (Main Table V). Numbers of major weapons in world trade by three-year period are charted on the previous page and summarized as follows (in units):

	1988-90	91-93	94-96	97-99
LAND ARMAMENTS	31,761	23,258	20,173	14,506
Tanks	5,948	3,967	2,958	3,100
Artil., Field & Anti-Air	17,530	13,782	6,527	5,419
Armored Pers. Carriers	8,283	5,509	10,688	5,987
NAVAL CRAFT	424	312	500	364
	51	40	66	64
Major Surface Combat.				
Other Surface Combat.	346	252	395	262
Missile Attack Boats	9	9	26	24
Submarines	18	11	13	14
AIRCRAFT	5,537	3,040	2,479	2,459
Combat, Supersonic	1,729	934	577	1,147
Combat, Subsonic	234	212	210	120
Other Aircraft	2,414	1,268	845	590
Helicopters	1,160	626	847	602
_				
MISSILES	23,165	9,240	14,042	7,667
Surface-to-Air	19,312	8,253	13,426	6,717
Surface-to-Surface	2,440	580	60	132
Anti-Ship	1,413	407	556	818
TOTAL, ALL TYPES	60,887	35,850	37,194	24,996

There was a general decline in the total number of major weapons deliveries after the end of the cold war—that is, after 1988-1990: by 41% to 1991-1993 and by 59% to 1997-1999. In these subsequent deliveries, no clear-cut and common trend is evident. Most types continued to decline, but some, such as armored personnel carriers, major naval surface combatants, other surface combatants, and missile attack boats actually peaked in 1994-1996. Supersonic aircraft deliveries also rose sharply in the last period, nearly doubling

A comparison of two gross measures—the total world arms trade broadly defined and measured in dollars, as discussed above, and the total of major weapon quantities shown here—reveals a divergence in the last period, when the broad dollar volume rose while the number of major weapons of all types fell substantially.

	Indexes of World Arms Trade								
	Dollar Value	Total Number of							
	of All Arms*	Major Weapons							
1988-90	100	100							
1991-93	70	59							
1994-96	62	61							
1997-99	72	41							

^{*} In constant dollars, total for the period.

The divergence suggests that the arms trade of the 1997-1999 period placed less emphasis on major weapons and more on other hardware aspects, such as parts and upgrades, and repair, manufacturing and technical assistance, and other military services. Earlier periods showed roughly similar trends in the two measures.

(It should be cautioned that a simple quantity measure such as the overall number of major weapons obscures much variability, not only between the broad weapon types, but also within each type, between suppliers and/or recipients, and over time. Variations in such factors as size, complexity, and military effectiveness naturally affect value. The weapons count becomes a more meaningful indicator the narrower and more constant the composition by type.)

In the last two periods covered in Table V, that is, in 1994-1996 and 1997-1999, the main suppliers of most types of major weapons have been the United States and Russia, with France in third place, as the following table shows.

The U.S. has replaced the Soviet Union and Russia as the dominant world supplier of all major weapons, as shown above by changes in their shares of the total units of all types delivered over the last 12 years. The U.S. share rose from 8% in 1988-1990 to 35% in 1997-1999, while the Soviet/Russian share fell from 37% to a still substantial 14%.

Table 6. Major Weapons Delivered, by Supplier and Type, 1994-1999 And by Supplier, 1988-1999

Major Weapon Type	Total	United States	Russia	France Ge mar		United King- dom	Other East Europe	NATO		Middle East	Other East Asia	Others
	In Units In Percent (Total=100)											
				1994-	1999							
LAND ARMAMENTS Tanks Artillery, Field & Anti-Air Armored Pers. Carriers	34,679 6,058 11,946 16,675	34 31 35 35	22 12 35 16	3 8 6 8 2 4 3 11	3 6 3 1	3 1 2 4	11 28 4 9	10 5 1 18	1 1 1 2	2 1 4	1 1 1 1	4 1 8 1
NAVAL CRAFT Major Surface Combat. Other Surface Combat. Missile Attack Boats Submarines	864 130 657 50 27	12 26 11 —	20 5 24 — 33	5 10 5 25 4 4 8 28 7 52	6 3 4 42 —	5 16 3 8 —	3 4 4	14 18 15 —	6 8 	11 2 14 4	3 1 3 4 7	4 — 6 2 —
AIRCRAFT Combat, Supersonic Combat, Subsonic Other Aircraft Helicopters	4,938 1,724 330 1,435 1,449	33 51 39 11 30	16 13 6 6 31	7 3 6 2 — — 8 3 10 3	4 7 — 6 1	4 2 40 — 3	10 5 6 16 10	6 2 3 10 6	2 — 8 —	6 5 3 15	1 2 — 2 —	7 4 3 14 6
MISSILES Surface-to-Air Surface-to-Surface Anti-Ship TOTAL, ALL TYPES	21,709 20,143 192 1,374 62,190	16 14 32 45	18 19 — 5	34 0 35 0 36 0 15 0	6 5 — 23	2 2 16 1	18 20 — — 13	1 1 — 1	4 3 — 10 2	1 1 - 1 2	 16 1	1 1 — — 3
	02,190	21		YPES BY PE								<u> </u>
1988-1990 1991-1993 1994-1996 1997-1999 1988-1999	60,887 35,850 37,194 24,996 158,927	8 12 22 35 16	37 15 23 14 25	24 1 35 7 16 6 11 3 23 4	6 6 2 6 5	1 1 3 2 2	10 7 14 12 11	1 7 7 5 5	4 2 1 4 3	2 3 2 1	4 2 — 1 2	2 2 1 5

Russia was still the leader in total major weapons delivered through the 1994-1996 period, after which it relinquished the lead. France was the leader in 1991-1993 with 35%, second or third in the other three periods, and first in the combined 1991-1999 interval.

Eastern European countries continue to be important suppliers, with over 10% of the major weapon market in three of the four periods, including the last.

The U.S. and Russia have been prominent suppliers in nearly all of types of major weapons, reflecting their historic output capabilities. In the

1994-1999 span, the U.S. dominated in the export of aircraft and accounted for one third of world deliveries, nearly twice as many as Russia, the next largest supplier. This was especially true for supersonic aircraft, with the U.S. exporting over half of the world total, three times as many as Russia, in second place.

Russia supplied the most naval craft in that period, Germany was second, and the U.S., third.

In the case of other suppliers, specialization tendencies are evident: France, in missiles and helicopters; Germany, in armored personnel carriers, submarines and other naval craft; China, in missile attack boats and anti-ship missiles; the U.K., in major sur-

Table 7. Major Weapons Delivered, by Recipient Region and Type, 1994-1999

And by Recipient Region, 1988-1999

Major Weapon Type	Total	Middle East	West. Euro.		South. Africa	South Amer.		East. Euro.		Central Africa		North Amer.		Centr. Amer.
	In Units		In Percent (Total=100)											
		•			19	994-199	9							
LAND ARMAMENTS	34,679	39	16	12	10	3	4	7	1	3	3	2	_	_
Tanks	6,058	36	10	12	6	4	8	6	4	10	2	_	_	_
Artil., Field & Anti-Air		31	11	21	19	3	4	7	1	2	1	1	_	_
Armored Pers. Carr.	16,675	46	21	5	5	3	2	7	_	1	5	3	1	_
NAVAL CRAFT	864	35	12	17	_	15	7	2	2	4	2	1	1	4
Major Surface Com.	130	8	18	43	_	13	12	1	_	_	1	2	2	_
Other Surface Com.	657	39	11	11	_	16	6	3	2	5	2	_	1	5
Missile Attack Boats	50	54	12	12	_	16	_	_	4	2	_	_	_	_
Submarines	27	15	15	48	_	4	11	_	_	_	7	_	_	_
AIRCRAFT	4,938	16	17	26	5	11	7	4	2	3	4	1	1	1
Combat, Supersonic	1,724	13	25	37	3	6	9	2	2	1	2	_	1	_
Combat, Subsonic	330	18	2	33	3	34	_	_	3	3	_	_	_	3
Other Aircraft	1,435	17	17	25	6	7	9	4	3	2	4	1	_	1
Helicopters	1,449	18	12	14	6	16	5	8	1	6	6	4	2	_
MISSILES	21,709	12	26	20	9	15	7	1	6	1	_	2	1	_
Surface-to-Air	20,143	11	26	19	10	16	7	1	6	1	_	2	1	_
Surface-to-Surface	192	26	27	_	_	36	5	_	_	_	_	_	5	_
Anti-Ship	1,374	22	25	35	_	3	7	_	_	_	7	1	1	_
TOTAL, ALL TYPES	62,190	27	19	16	9	8	5	4	3	2	2	2	1	_
				ALL T	YPES B	Y PERIO	DD, 198	88-199	9					
1988-1990	60,887	23	30	6	2	1	25	5		4	2		_	2
1991-1993	35,850	47	19	9	1	2	11	1	_	4	1	1	_	1
1994-1996	37,194	28	22	9	13	8	6	4	4	1	2	2	1	_
1997-1999	24,996	26	16	26	4	8	4	6	2	4	2	1	_	_
	158,927	30	24	10	5	4	14	4	1	3	2	1	_	1

face combatants, subsonic combat aircraft, and antiship missiles; Eastern European countries, in tanks and other aircraft; other NATO countries, in armored personnel carriers and naval surface combatants, etc.

The Middle East and Western Europe have been the primary importing regions for major weapons in each of the three-year periods from 1988 to 1999, as the above table shows. The Middle East was the leading importing region from 1991-1993, when it had nearly half of the world's deliveries, through 1997-1999, when it's share was one quarter. West Europe led in 1988-1990 with nearly one-third, but cut its share by half to 16% by 1997-1999.

In the last two periods (1994-1999), both regions imported strongly in all four major categories of weapons, with emphasis by the Middle East on land and naval weapons, and by Western Europe, on missiles and aircraft.

East Asia, the third largest importing region over the entire period, raised its share sharply in 1997-1999 to about one quarter of the world total, to become regional co-leader with the Middle East. In 1994-1999, the region accounted for over one third of world imports of large naval surface combatants, submarines, supersonic and susbsonic aircraft, and anti-ship missiles.

South Asia was the third largest importing region over the entire 12-year period, but reduced its share from a quarter in 1988-1990 to only 4% in 1997-1999.

Sizable world import shares were held by Southern Africa (13% in 1994-1996) and South

America (8% in 1994-1999). Southern African countries imported primarily artillery and surface-to-air missiles, and South American, subsonic aircraft and helicopters, missile attack boats, and surface-to-air and surface-to-surface missiles.